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Remittance of Intermediate Rent

W. S. Wallace

No 3

An Inaugural Thesis or Dissertation

On the Remittent, & Intermittent Fever which prevailed in Columbia Lancaster County Pa. in 1823.

Submitted to the examination of the Provost, Trustees, & Medical Professors of the University of Pennsylvania.

As a candidate for the degree of Doctor of Medicine.

by William S. Wallace.

Pennsylvania.

Columbia is a Borough of some considerable note, situated immediately on the margin of the Susquehannah River, between the mouth of Chickques Creek and Turkey-hill falls, the former distant thru and the latter five miles. The River is intersected with a number of pretty large Islands, and interspersed with numerous large Rocks. Our shore is generally lined with Boats, Arks, and Rafts trading to this place and are stationed here for a considerable time. The River opposite the Borough is about a mile and a quarter wide, meandering in a south-east direction. Columbia stands on the east side of this famous River, in a very rich and extensive valley and cultivated in the best manner. The Boats and Arks which lined the shore had more or less stagnant water in them of a very offensive smell, which no doubt was the immediate cause of the prevailing epidemic. For that mark miasmata, or the effluvia arising from stagnant

water or marshy grounds when acted upon by heat will produce Remittents and Intermittents is well known. The fishermen and labouring class of people seem to be for the most part the most subject to it. The fishermen are much exposed (by lying in their fish-baskets in the night season) to the damp night air without the necessary covering. To these causes might be added violent exercise in poling their canoes against so turbulent a stream as the Susquehanna and the practice of continuing in the water such a length of time.

This fever commenced with a slight chill, more or less nausea, vomiting or purging of bile, pain or oppression about the Præcordia, with extreme pain in the head, and small of the back, or a general aching of the bones. The symptoms were such as generally characterize the ushering in of Biliodes Remitting Fevers wherever they prevail. But these symptoms often varied and in cases of much violence no chill occurred at all,

Columbia 1.a

some few cases in the present instance were marked with a very peculiar determination to the brain, attended with uncommon giddiness, much stupor and even delirium: inflamed eyes and flushed face, these last symptoms were more evident particularly in those who had been using violent exercise or sitting on the river fishing in the noon day sun. In some cases where there was bilious purging there was great pain and tenesmus which was indicative of very acrid matter in the intestinal canal and was truly distressing to the patient. In many cases the exciting cause could be traced, as exposure to the sun, violent exercise, lying out in the night air, hard drinking, or remaining too long in the water when fishing. When the disease was completely formed the pulse was for the most part full, except in some few cases, thirst very excessive, skin parched and hot, tongue yellow and much furred. If however from entire neglect

the disease was suffered to progress the remissions became more indistinct and the Continued or Typhus grade of disease was induced which made it extremely difficult to manage, for it was attended with all the distressing symptoms which generally characterize these fevers. If called in early and the pulse was full, I generally began my treatment by opening a vein in the arm from which I generally took from eight to ten ounces of blood, which never seem'd necessary to repeat. the bloods in some instances exhibited a size appearance. This depletion was universally attended with pleasing effects immediately affording a mitigation of the most alarming and distressing symptoms. The next administration I made use of was an Emetic of the tartrite of Antimony and the stomach was completely diluted and washed out with Chamomile tea which always brought away great quantities of bile. of the Emetic

did not determine to the bowels I then gave a Cathartic of Calomel Combined with Rheubarb or Jalape which produced generally three or four very copious stools which had a very happy result, At night I gave Calomel grs iij Combined with Opium grs i and Tart: Emet: 1/4 gr. which produced comfortable rest through the night and in the morning swept away any offensive matter that might be lurking in the bowels. The diaphoretics through the day in time of the Exacerbation of fever were the Neutral mixture - Calomel combined with Tart: Emetic Alternated every four hours which proved a valuable medicine in reducing the fever. In some cases I continued to administer in this way until the fever was entirely subdued. I do not recollect that the Mercury administered in this way affected the mouth of any but one or two of the patients and then but very slightly. I treated my patients in this manner the fever

was often subdued in five or six days. What I mean by the fever being subdued is that a complete intermission was brought about and the disease was easily conquered by giving the bark and Serpentaria alone or in combination, or that invaluable medecine the Sulphate of Quinine. In some cases I used the Nitre, Tart. Emet: and Calomel (Antim. ponders) but from what cause I cannot devise nitre did not answer my expectation my patients got no better but the fever seem'd to increase and consequently I desisted from using it. I found Epispastics and Sinapisms of great importance when applied in the proper stage of the disease, the former after depletion and the apparent inflammatory symptoms moderated, and the latter accompanied with the former when the disease advanced to the Typhus stage. When the bowels were affected with a tenesmus and dysenteric symptoms Ol: Ricini in the day

and Calomel and Opium at night was given with the happiest effect: From the beginning of October until the 20th of the same month Intermittents were the prevailing form of disease, these appeared very obstinate & chiefly of the tertian type, but few yielded to the common modes of Practice, big Emetics, Cathartics, and use of the Bark alone. In the Complete intermission I gave a medicine which had a very excellent effect after the Stomach and bowels were cleansed, It was Composed of ℞ Pulv: Cort: ℥j Pulv: Rhei ℥s Pulv: Ipecac grs XV, to be put into one pint of Old Rye whiskey or good brandy and well agitated before it was used ½ of of this was given every two hours during the intermission. After two or three doses it determined to the bowels and proved a very active Cathartic which generally brought away much offensive matter, and the spirits kept up a reasonable degree of action, so that its

depletion was not overreached, a determination to the skin was the consequence produced from the Ipecac: I found a small bleeding in most of the recent cases of this fever arising from Marsh Miasmata that came under my notice serviceable, And was careful not to exhibit the Bark until I had procured a complete intermission. One moderate bleeding at the commencement I found sufficient, it converted that dumb sort of Chill to a complete shake which opened to view the Complete form of fever, twenty-five drops of Laudanum was given in the Cold stage which shortned the Paroxysm. One Case presented to my notice which gave me much uneasiness least I should not manage it with that correctness I desired to do. My Patient aged 22 years. I saw him in the second paroxysm which was so violent that it took two or three persons to hold him, he Complained

that his limbs and back would come asunder; it appeared more like a severe attack of St. Vitus's Dance than anything else it lasted nearly two hours and was followed with violent fever which was scarcely off before the shake reappeared and in the same manner. In this case I was afraid to use the lancet, his pulse while in the cold stage was hardly perceptible, but in the fever full and bounding with volume sufficient to deplete. About the coming on of the next shake I gave him an Emetic of Tart: Emetic which operated finely throwing off a great quantity of matter of a blue colour similar to indigo water, his pulse now became slow and weak and his Countenance very indicative of a dissolution. Being sensible that a considerable quantity of morbid matter was yet with him and fearing to deplete any more was at a stand what to do. Thinking

the preparation of Bark, Rhei and Ipecac: as mentioned before might be beneficial; I gave him a wine glass ful every hour and procured several very offensive stools and a perfect intermission of three hours in which time I applied the above medicine and overcame the next expected shake. The strength animation and looks of my patient recovered wonderfully. His pulse now became full enough regular and not too frequent. I now made use of the Sulphate of Quinine and with the most decided benefit — I cannot say I have had reason to regret treating my patients as herein mentioned; but fear, I have seen one or two fatal effects produced by administering the bark too early in the disease before the stomach and intestines were properly cleansed or intermission perfected — I have given the Sulphate Quinine to upwards of Twenty of my patients

and with the most decided benefit. It has not failed in a single instance where the Stomach was in a proper state to receive it. I generally gave it in Mixture prepared by triturating ten grains of the Quinine in a mortar with about a drachm of Gum Arabic and three ounces of water until the Quinine was completely suspended. I then order'd my patient to take a table Spoonful every hour during the intermission until all was taken. &c

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rather too speculative for the subject as a practical one but interesting & ingenious.

Typhoid Fever

1824.

T. L. Smith